

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) today announced that the city of Milwaukee will receive \$142,000 for the Weed and Seed Program operating in the Clarke Square neighborhood. Weed and Seed is a federal program that works to prevent, control and reduce violent crime, drug abuse and gang activity in designated high-crime neighborhoods across the country. Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors work together to “weed out” violent criminals and drug abusers, while public agencies and community-based private organizations collaborate to “seed” much-needed human services. These may include prevention, intervention, treatment and neighborhood restoration programs.

This is the fourth award the Clarke Square site has received for the implementation of its Weed and Seed strategy.

This award will allow law enforcement to continue working on intelligence sharing, which will help put a stop to violent crime and quality-of-life issues for those individuals who live in the Clarke Square neighborhood. Community policing efforts will be aimed at increasing positive communication and confidence between law enforcement, prosecution units and community residents through more visibility, information sharing, and better response to quality-of-life and crime issues. Community policing does this by embracing two key concepts — community engagement and problem solving. Community policing strategies foster a sense of responsibility within the community for solving crime problems and help develop cooperative relationships between the police and residents.

“The Weed and Seed strategy has really made a difference in the Clarke Square neighborhood, providing a blueprint for the city of Milwaukee to tackle crime problems from all different angles,” Congresswoman Moore said. “More police on the streets alone might abate violent crime for a while, but we ultimately need a comprehensive approach that looks at preventing crime in the first place, educating community residents, promoting the involvement of businesses and community organizations and facilitating communication between these groups, so that everyone feels they have a stake in the game. Weed and Seed does just this, and it’s been very successful.”

At each site, the relevant U.S. Attorney's Office plays a leadership role in organizing local officials, community representatives, and other key stakeholders to form a steering committee. The U.S. Attorney's Office also facilitates coordination of federal, state, and local law enforcement efforts so that sites use federal law enforcement partners in weeding strategies, which are those that help eliminate violent crime and drug abusers. In some instances, the U.S.

Attorney's Office helps sites mobilize resources from a variety of federal agencies for seeding programs that bring human services to a community. In most Weed and Seed sites, joint task forces of law enforcement agencies from all levels of government aim to reduce both crime and fear of crime, which gives hope to residents living in distressed neighborhoods and sets the stage for community revitalization.

The prevention, intervention, and treatment component concentrates an array of human services on the designated neighborhood and links law enforcement, social services agencies, the private sector, and the community to improve the overall quality of services to residents. Every Weed and Seed site is required to establish a Safe Haven, a multiservice center often housed in a school or community center, where many youth- and adult-oriented services are delivered.

The program works to implement educational programs such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and GED classes that not only help reduce negative behaviors, but also increase employment marketability. The Weed and Seed program will also engage community service workers in neighborhood improvement efforts and help sustain job development that is within walking distance of the Clarke Square neighborhood or accessible by bus transportation.

This Clarke Square site is bordered by Cesar Chavez Drive (South 16th Street) on the East, West Pierce Street on the North, West Mitchell Street on the South and 23rd and 31st Streets on the West. There are more than 250 Weed and Seed programs in the country, with sites ranging in size from several neighborhood blocks to several square miles. Populations range from 3,000 to 50,000.

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